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IN THIS ISSUE:

U.S. LABOR DEPARTMENT PROPOSES
NEW EEO CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION CHANGES
'SIGNIFICANT BREAKTHROUGH'

BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT RISES SIGNIFICANTLY
IN AUGUST, MATCHING 1974-75 RECESSION HIGH

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT HITS RECORD PEAK IN JULY 1977,
BUT THEIR JOBLESS RATE REMAINS TOO HIGH, LABOR SECRETARY SAYS

MARSHALL ANNOUNCES 3 NEW JOB CORPS CENTERS;
CONSERVATION CORPS AGREEMENT APPROVED

SECRETARY OF LABOR RAY MARSHALL
STRESSES THAT FARMWORKERS NEED FEDERAL COVERAGE

INSURED JOBLESS RATE MOVES ABOVE 4.5 PERCENT;
EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS RESUME

MODIFIED FINAL JUDGMENT ISSUED IN
GOODYEAR AGE DISCRIMINATION CASE

WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX FOR AUGUST 1977

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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Week of September 12, 1977

U.S. LABOR DEPARTMENT PROPOSES
NEW EEO CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Department of Labor has announced two plans to bring more women and minority group members into the Nation's construction industry.

The plans would increase equal employment opportunity (EEO) in federal and federally-assisted construction work.

One plan would establish affirmative action requirements, including goals and timetables, to hire and promote women in construction occupations.

The other would standardize procedures requiring construction contractors and subcontractors to provide nondiscrimination and affirmative action programs for women and minority group members.

Included in the proposals are recommendations to.

-- establish the first regulatory framework for implementing EEO in all federal construction contract work;

-- set goals and timetables for women, for a three-year period, ranging from 3.1 percent to 6.9 percent participation in all construction trades;

-- abolish two types of EEO programs, imposed plans and special bid conditions, now used for setting EEO requirement in local or geographical areas and substitute standard contract specifications;

-- modify hometown or voluntary plans, also used for establishing local EEO programs, to include goals and timetables for women, and

-- codify authority for the department to establishment or modify goals and timetables for minorities and women in specific areas of the country.

The EEO contractual obligations are rooted in Executive Order 11246, as amended. Under the order, federal contractors and subcontractors are prohibited from employment discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion or national origin, and are required to take affirmative action to provide equal job opportunities for women and minorities. Contracts exceeding $10,000 are covered.

The order is administered by the Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) in the Employment Standards Administration.

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"The procedures we propose will help eliminate confusion in the federal government's EEO requirements for the construction industry and will bring about greater uniformity in our construction compliance program," said Donald Elisburg, assistant secretary of labor for employment standards.

"But our ultimate goal," he continued "is to ensure EEO, and therefore increased job opportunities, for women and minorities who now work or want to work in the construction industry."

In the two proposals OFCCP details its recommendations, first, for new regulations affecting the construction industry generally, and, second, for specific affirmative action requirements affecting women.

A suggested new part (41 CFR 60-4) in the Code of Federal Regulations would provide a specific regulatory framework to carry out EEO and affirmative action programs for women and minorities in the construction industry.

Although basic obligations for federal and federally-assisted construction contractors already exist, the proposed new regulations would revamp and standardize requirements.

The regulatory framework would also provide for establishment of goals and timetables for hiring and promoting women on federal and federally-assisted construction contracts. Under present requirements, goals and timetables are developed in the construction industry only for minority group members.

Goals would be based on workforce, demographic, or other geographical data.

OFCCP Director Weldon J. Rougeau emphasized that exclusion of women from construction work and discrimination against minorities will not be eliminated in this country without strong leadership and positive efforts by the government and cooperation from employers and unions.

Authority provided in the new regulations is expected to result in broader application of the executive order requirements than is now possible through OFCCP's existing plans.

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Interested parties are invited to present their views on the two proposals. Comments will be received until Sept. 29, 1977, and should be addressed to Weldon J. Rougeau, director, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Room C-3324, New Department of Labor Building, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20210.

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION CHANGES
'SIGNIFICANT BREAKTHROUGH'

WASHINGTON -- "The Labor Department's proposal to establish affirmative action requirements, including goals and timetables, for the hiring and promotion of women in the construction industry is a significant breakthrough for women seeking nontraditional jobs," Alexis M. Herman, director of the U.S. Labor Department's Women's Bureau, said.

"Opening the better paying jobs in the skilled trades and crafts to women has long been an objective of the Women's Bureau. We have seen the earnings gap widen between men and women workers over the past two decades. In 1955, women workers were earning 63.4 percent of what men earned. In 1975, women's earnings were only 59.9 percent of men's earnings. We believe moving more women into nontraditional occupations is a logical means of narrowing that gap.

"Research done by the bureau shows that there are women available for these jobs; there are women who are interested.

"Not all women want construction jobs, of course," Herman said. "But women should be made aware of the opportunities available to them and should be given the right to choose."

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Week of September 12, 1977

BLACK UNEMPLOYMENT RISES SIGNIFICANTLY
IN AUGUST, MATCHING 1974-75 RECESSION HIGH

WASHINGTON -- The jobless rate for black workers rose significantly from 13.2 percent in July, to 14.5 percent in August--matching the post World War II high reached during the 1974-75 recession.

The Nation's total unemployment rate increased slightly, returning to the June level of 7.1 percent. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the rate has hovered around the 7-percent mark for the past 5 months.

Total employment--as measured by the monthly survey of households--resumed its advance in August with a modest increase of 210,000 to 90.8 million. The number of employed persons has grown by 2.9 million over the past year, while the proportion of the population with jobs has increased from 56.2 to 57.1 percent.

Nonfarm payroll employment--as measured by the monthly survey of establishments--was up only slightly (90,000) over the month. At 82.4 million, the payroll job count was 2.8 million above its year-ago level.

The number of unemployed persons rose by 180,000 in August to 6.9 million, seasonally adjusted. The increase occurred primarily among persons losing their jobs, as their proportion of the jobless total rose for the second consecutive month, to 47 percent.

The overall unemployment rate was 7.1 percent, up from 6.9 percent in July. The jobless rate has fluctuated around the 7-percent mark since April, after declining from 8 percent in the preceding 5-month period. Nearly all worker groups shared in the over-the-year improvement--two notable exceptions were black and Vietnam-era veterans.

Jobless rates were up for black men (11.7 percent) and women (12.2 percent), while the rate for black teenagers (40.4 percent) approximated July's extremely high level. By contrast, there was little change in the unemployment rates among white men (4.5 percent), women (6.3 percent), or teenagers (14.7 percent). As a result of these developments, the ratio of black-to-white jobless rates continued its recent updrift to the unusually high level of 2.4 to 1 in August.

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The average (mean) duration of unemployment was 13.5 weeks in August, continuing a downward trend that began in early 1976. Average duration has declined about one and a half weeks since May.

The number of persons working part time for economic reasons declined 170,000 from July and stood at 3.2 million in August. All of the decline occurred among those who usually work at full-time jobs.

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Week of September 12, 1977

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT HITS RECORD PEAK IN JULY 1977,
BUT THEIR JOBLESS RATE REMAINS TOO HIGH, LABOR SECRETARY SAYS

WASHINGTON -- Youth employment rose and the unemployment rate of young people declined slightly during the summer of 1977. Yet their jobless rate--particularly minority youths--remains "intolerably high," Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall said.

Citing a report on youth employment during July 1977, by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, Secretary Marshall said employment to 16- to 21-year olds reached an all-time peak of 15.1 million in July 1977. Their 15.3-percent jobless rate in July was down from the 15.9 percent recorded in July 1976, he said.

He attributed the improvement to a record 2 million federally-funded summer jobs provided for teenagers and young adults this year, as well as to the nation's gradual recovery from economic recession, but added that most of the unemployment drop was among white youths.

"For minority youths, the rate remains intolerably high," approaching 40 percent, he said.

"President Carter is determined to see that the jobless young men and women of today do not become the unemployed adults of tomorrow," Marshall said.

He announced that the Administration has proposed establishing three new Job Corps centers--in Albany, Ga.; San Bernardino, Calif., and Benton, Pa.--as part of its planned doubling of the program providing education, job training and other services to disadvantaged youth.

The secretary also announced the signing of an agreement with the Departments of Agriculture and Interior to establish a Young Adult Conservation Corps, offering jobs and training to more than 22,000 youths at a time in camps run by the Forest Service and National Park Service.

Noting that half of all jobless Americans are under age 24 and that more than 700,000 teenagers drop out of school without earning a high school diploma because they lack hope for jobs, the federal official said finding meaningful jobs and training for these workers has become "critical."

Marshall said the Administration will announce other steps toward combatting high youth unemployment in the months ahead, using authority granted in the youth employment and training legislation signed by the President in August.

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Week of September 12, 1977

MARSHALL ANNOUNCES 3 NEW JOB CORPS CENTERS;
CONSERVATION CORPS AGREEMENT APPROVED

WASHINGTON -- Three new Job Corps centers to serve more than 1,000 disadvantaged youths have been proposed as part of the Administration's program to double the size of the corps.

Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall announced the centers would be located near San Bernardino, Calif., Albany, Ga., and Benton, Pa. This would raise to 64 the number of Job Corps centers.

In another action benefitting youths, the Departments of Agriculture and Interior joined with the Labor Department in an interagency agreement to administer the Young Adult Conservation Corps. (YAC).

The Young Adult Conservation Corps, part of President Carter's youth employment program, will be for jobless young people 16 through 23 from all economic backgrounds.

Secretary Marshall said the action concerning the new Job Corps centers "represents a vital beginning in our strategy to reenergize the Job Corps as we move to tackle the difficult problem of youth unemployment."

Following are details about the proposed Job Corps centers:

-- Turner Job Corps Center, at the Turner Air Force Base complex at Albany, Ga., will be a training center with residential, nonresidential and educational facilities for about 700 disadvantaged men and women, ages 16 through 21. It will have a staff of about 230, with the entire center using 74 acres and 20 buildings of the facility. The center is approximately 4 miles from Albany.

-- Benton Job Corps Center, at Benton Air Force Base on the top slopes of Red Rock Mountain, approximately 9 miles north of Benton, Pa., will have the same facilities as the Turner center for 250 to 300 disadvantaged men and women. It will have a staff of about 100 housed in 31 buildings on 70-80 acres of cleared land.

-- Fremont Job Corps Center, at a 17-acre junior high school site northwest of San Bernardino, will house approximately 200 resident and 75 nonresident disadvantaged youth who need intensive employment-related services. It will have a staff of 90, housed in 9 buildings.

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Enrollees at the centers will receive skill training in selected vocational courses and continuing and/or remedial education in academic subjects.

The appropriations for the Job Corps to operate the 61 centers currently in operation are going to increase from nearly $200 million to $487,000 million by fiscal year 1978, if the Congress approves the request. These dollars would be expanding the Job Corps from about 50,000 enrollees a year to 100,000.

Present plans for the expansion of the corps call for establishment of about a dozen new centers during the next 12 months, counting the three, and perhaps another 30-60 centers to provide the capacity to enroll 100,000 a year.

Under the agreement with the Agriculture and Interior Departments for the Young Adult Conservation Corps, the Labor Department will be responsible for the administration of the $233.3 million program for 22,000 youths, their recruitment and referral.

Agriculture's Forest Service and Interior's Office of Manpower Training and Youth Activities will be responsible for the establishment and management of the camps and projects. They will handle the selection of enrollees, work assignments, training, discipline, and the conduct of an effective program at each camp, the exact number not determined yet.

The program is expected to begin about Oct. 1, 1977, with the total program in operation by the summer of 1978.

Enrollees will work on a wide variety of projects in such fields as: plant and wildlife preservation, management, and improvement; recreational facilities development, rehabilitation, and maintenance; insect and disease prevention and control; and natural disaster damage control and cleanup. The participants can be enrolled in the program for up to 12 months and will be paid the minimum wage.

Under the law, 30 percent of the funds available will be used to support state and local programs. Agriculture and Interior will arrange for those programs through agreements with representatives of appropriate governmental agencies, public agencies, and private non-profit agencies.

The Labor Department's Employment and Training Administration will be responsible

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for the referral of prospective participants to the Departments of Agriculture and Interior through the network of state employment service agencies and through prime sponsors operating employment and training programs under Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) grants. Prime sponsors include state, county, and local governments, Native American organizations, and migrant and seasonal farmworkers groups conducting CETA programs.

The Young Adult Conservation Corps is one of the four programs in the Youth Employment and Demonstrations Projects Act of 1977 signed Aug. 5 by President Carter to help alleviate the Nation's youth unemployment problem.

Participating Department of Interior agencies eventually will employ some 12,000 youths in the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, and the Office of Territories.

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Week of September 12, 1977

SECRETARY OF LABOR RAY MARSHALL
STRESSES THAT FARMWORKERS NEED FEDERAL COVERAGE

FRESNO, Calif. -- Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall believes that "the major problem facing farmworkers is that they are exempted from coverage by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA)."

In a speech before the Third Constitutional Convention of the United Farm Workers of America, Secretary Marshall said the the NLRA "covers almost every group of American workers, except farmworkers."

Marshall said there is "no secret" why farmworkers have been "systematically excluded from equal coverage" under this and other federal laws.

"It isn't because farmwork is a strange and alien job fundamentally different from other kinds of labor," he said.

"Instead," he added, "the answer is that when these laws were passed farmworkers didn't have enough political power to assert their rights."

Marshall made it clear he was speaking for himself and not necessarily for the Administration. He said he has an "open mind" on the type of coverage needed but favors bringing farmworkers under the NLRA, rather than enacting a separate law.

In addition, Marshall noted that farmworkers are not adequately covered by other federal labor laws.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act, administered by the Labor Department, covers almost every group of American workers except those who work on farms with 10 or fewer employees, Secretary Marshall said. He said that he would like to change this law, which exempts 87 percent of American farms.

Marshall said the Administration's minimum wage proposals would help end the discrimination against farm workers in this area.

Other points made by Marshall included:

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-- The Administration's proposals concerning undocumented aliens would reduce labor surpluses and make it easier for farmworkers to achieve better wages and working conditions.

-- He has discussed with UFWA President Cesar Chavez the idea of setting up the first apprenticeship program for agricultural workers.

-- With the $52 million in funds set aside for special job creation for farmworkers under the President's Economic Stimulus Package, the Labor Department hopes to provide 12,000 new public service jobs for farmworkers.

INSURED JOBLESS RATE MOVES ABOVE 4.5 PERCENT; EXTENDED UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS RESUME

WASHINGTON -- The national insured unemployment rate (IUR) moved back above 4.5 percent (to 4.508) for the 13-week period ending Aug. 13, leading to renewal of payment of regular extended unemployment insurance benefits in 38 states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall announced.

Secretary Marshall said that the renewal of extended benefit payments would affect approximately 200,000 recipients whose number of weeks of eligibility were limited when the IUR dropped below 4.5 percent in July. Benefits will be paid on unemployment beginning the week of Aug. 28.

In the other 12 states, both extended benefit and Federal Supplemental Benefit payments have continued, based on provisions of federal and state laws that authorize such payments when the statewide IUR averages 5 percent or more for a 13-week period.

Extended benefits will resume in:

Alabama
Arizona
Arkansas
Colorado
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida
Georgia
Hawaii
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
Montana
Nebraska
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Mexico
North Carolina
North Dakota
Ohio
Oklahoma
Puerto Rico
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Texas
Utah
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming

# # #

MODIFIED FINAL JUDGMENT ISSUED IN GOODYEAR AGE DISCRIMINATION CASE

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. District Court in Tampa, Fla., has issued a modified final judgment in a U.S. Labor Department Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) suit against Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company.

The action resulted from the company's appeal of a May 1976 judgment by the district court. The May judgment enjoined the firm from violating the ADEA nationwide. Additionally it ordered Goodyear to pay $2,964 in back wages to an employee found by the court to have been discharged because of his age, in violation of the ADEA.

Goodyear appealed the judgment and, in accordance with the findings of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (New Orleans), the modified judgment limits the injunction against violating the ADEA to the firm's Auburndale, Fla., retail service store.

The portion of the original judgment ordering Goodyear to pay the discharged employee $2,964 in back wages was upheld by the appellate court and remains unchanged in the modified final judgment.

The Age Discrimination in Employment Act protects persons 40 to 65 years of age from discrimination based on age in such matters as hiring, discharge, leave, compensation and promotion.

Legal action followed investigations made by the U.S. Labor Department's Wage and Hour Division, a unit of the Employment Standards Administration.

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WHOLESALE PRICE INDEX FOR AUGUST 1977

WASHINGTON -- The Wholesale Price Index for All Commodities edged up 0.1 percent from July to August on a seasonally adjusted basis. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the Finished Goods Price Index also rose 0.1 percent in August.

(This index reflects only changes in prices received by producers for goods eventually sold to final users and thus does not duplicate price changes as they move through all stages of processing. For this reason, the Bureau is now giving greater emphasis in this and future press releases to the Finished Goods Price Index.)

This was the third consecutive month of little or no change in the Finished Goods Price Index, following 6 months of advances averaging 0.8 percent. In August, lower prices for consumer foods offset increases for consumer durables and producer finished goods.

Prices for finished goods excluding foods were up 0.4 percent, about the same as in recent months. The index of intermediate materials excluding foods rose 0.5 percent, slightly less than in July. Prices of crude materials excluding foods increased 1.9 percent after showing no change in July.

On a commodity basis, the price index for industrial commodities moved up 0.5 percent for the second consecutive month. The farm products index declined more than in July, but the processed foods and feeds index fell less.

Before seasonal adjustment, the All Commodities WPI declined 0.2 percent in August to 194.8 (1967=100), while the Finished Goods Price Index was unchanged at 181.3

Over the year, the All Commodities WPI was up 5.9 percent, and the Finished Goods Price Index was 6.6 percent higher. Prices for finished goods excluding foods rose 6.5 percent from August 1976 to August 1977, and consumer foods moved up 6.9 percent.

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Week of September 12, 1977

FILLERS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The first closed shop clause in a labor contract was won by the Journeyman Cordwainers' Union in New York City, in 1805, according to "Labor Firsts in America," a publication of the U.S. Department of Labor.

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The first use of arbitration and the sliding wage scale was by Pittsburgh iron puddlers in 1865, according to "Labor Firsts in America," a publication of the U.S. Department of Labor.

* * *

The first state legislation permitting a state to attempt to settle labor disputes was in Maryland in 1878, according to "Labor Firsts in America," a publication of the U.S. Department of Labor.

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The first state legislation authorizing voluntary arbitration was in Pennsylvania in 1883, according to "Labor Firsts in America," published by the U.S. Department of Labor.

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The first collective bargaining agreement in construction was by bricklayers in New York City in 1865, according to "Labor Firsts in America," published by the U.S. Department of Labor.

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